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## COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

### *Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy*

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### **DMME Announces Proposed Regulations and Notices of Intended Regulatory Action**

- Mineral mining regulations proposed; intended regulatory action on public participation guidelines, coal and mineral mining regulations -

**Richmond, VA** – The Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) today announced the publication of proposed amendments to mineral mining reclamation regulations and notices of intended regulatory action on public participation guidelines and various coal and mineral mining regulations.

Proposed reclamation regulations for (non-coal) mineral mining address general requirements, permit standards, bonding, general performance standards for mineral mining, and enforcement. Amendments to the regulations were needed to address industry changes and changes in technology, eliminate duplicative or nonessential requirements, clarify and strengthen current requirements and establish new requirements. The amended regulations will help to ensure that mineral mines are reclaimed in a manner supportive of future use.

The proposed regulations, which will replace the Minerals Other Than Coal Regulations, 4 VAC 25-30, will be published in the Virginia Register of Regulations on August 26, 2002. Public comments may be sent to Conrad T. Spangler, III, Division Director, Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, Division of Mineral Mining, P.O. Box 3727, Charlottesville, VA 22903-00667, via e-mail at [conrad.spangler@dmme.virginia.gov](mailto:conrad.spangler@dmme.virginia.gov) or by calling (434) 951-6312 until October 26, 2002.

DMME filed notices of intended regulatory action on the agency's public participation guidelines, Board of Coal Mining Examiners certification requirements, Board of Mineral Mining Examiners certification requirements for mineral miners, and regulations governing coal stockpiles and bulk storage and handling facilities at coal mines. The following regulations would be amended to incorporate Administrative Process Act and executive order changes as a result of the periodic review.

- Public Participation Guidelines state how DMME, the Board of Coal Mining Examiners, the Board of Mineral Mining Examiners and the Virginia Gas and Oil Board will: (i) respond to petitions for rulemaking; (ii) maintain a regulatory mailing list; (iii) notify and include interested persons in the regulatory development process; and (iv) comply with the requirements for adopting regulations in the Administrative Process Act.
- Board of Coal Mining Examiners certification requirements ensure that miners are certified and perform tasks required to mine coal safely and knowledgeably, provide for the health and safety of persons and property on or near the mines, provide a pool of qualified mining employees, and encourage productive coal mines.
- Board of Mineral Mining Examiners Certification Requirements for Mineral Miners set forth requirements for certification of mineral miners in Virginia and establishes experience and education requirements for the various types of certifications, examination requirements, certification, reciprocity with other states, continuing education, and certification renewal. Certification classifications include general mineral miner, underground foreman, surface foreman, surface foreman - open pit, surface blaster, underground mining blaster, mineral mining electrician, and mine inspector.

The purpose of the regulatory action pertaining to coal stockpiles and bulk storage and handling facilities is to protect mine workers from potential health and safety hazards. Protective measures would include the implementation of equipment use procedures and controlling the use of heavy equipment around coal and material stockpiles and bulk storage and handling facilities located at coal mine facilities that use underlying coal feeders.

All notices of intended regulatory action were published in the Virginia Register of Regulations on August 12, 2002. Public comments may be sent to Stephen A. Walz, Division Director, Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, Ninth Street Office Building, 8th Floor, 202 North Ninth Street, Richmond, VA 23219-3402, via e-mail at [steve.walz@dmme.virginia.gov](mailto:steve.walz@dmme.virginia.gov) or by calling (804) 692-3211 until September 12, 2002.

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